

DELHI | BENGALURU | HYDERABAD | GOA

DISCOVER INDIA

MARCH-APRIL 2019 | ₹100



WHERE THE WORLD TRAVELS



25

ADVENTURES *in* India

WORTH TRAVELLING FOR

A WINDOW TO TAJ
AGRA HOTELS
with the
BEST VIEWS

HIDDEN GEMS
JOHAR VALLEY
BUNDI

IN FRAMES
THE BIG CATS OF
RANTHAMBORE



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



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ON THE COVER

Model **Ewelina Woznica**
 creativehomeliving
Shot at the **Taj Mahal, Agra**
Photographed by **Harshit Doshi**
 musafir_dil_harshi
Dress by **Ritu Kumar**

'T

o other countries, I may go as a tourist, but to India, I come as a pilgrim.' Martin Luther King Jr's pithy description of the country defines modern India: where diversity finds place in the second-most populous country in the world; where a pluralistic and multilingual society has emerged as one of the fastest growing economies; where the tourism and hospitality industry is a key driver of the growth story. And, why not? After all, India caters to every type of traveller and taste—whether it's the serenity of beach life along its languid coast, the ruggedness of the great Himalayas, the spirituality experienced in the heritage-laced temples, monasteries, mausoleums, and churches, or the wellness quotient of yoga's birthplace. There's something for everyone in the seventh-largest country of the world.

The all-new edition of *Discover India* is tailor-made to make your Indian sojourn memorable and effortless, whether you're visiting for the first time or seeking the multifarious 'hidden gems' that the country has to offer. From a 24-hour guide to Kolkata (pg 36) to an in-depth tour of Delhi and Bengaluru in City Focus (pg 21), we help you navigate through the best in the country.

Get ready for an adrenaline overload with our cover story on the top 25 adventure activities (pg 44), or set foot in the little known Johar Valley in Uttarakhand (pg 72) to savour pristine Himalayan landscapes. Close to the popular city of Jaipur, we stop over at Bundi (pg 66) in Rajasthan to discover murals and architecture that'll leave you spellbound. While our photo essay on Ranthambore National Park (pg 98) takes you into the territory of the big cat, our journey to Goan wetlands (pg 62) goes beyond the beaches, and into the wild, in search of otters! And our Survival Guide (pg 118) caters to your every need as a traveller here.

My Turkish friend candidly confessed: "Though I live in Istanbul, my heart belongs to India." And like him, there are many who have fallen in love with the enigma called 'India'. It's a country that welcomes you with open arms.

IN THIS ISSUE...



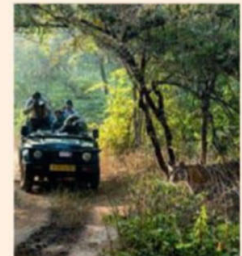
CITY FOCUS

The IT capital of India, Bengaluru, is witnessing a resurgence of sorts. Find out why it should be on your itinerary.



EXPLORE

Besides breathtaking views of the Himalayas, Johar Valley in Uttarakhand offers a virgin trail for serious trekkers.



EXPERIENCE

Chase the big cat through the golden grasslands of the Ranthambore National Park in Rajasthan.



#13

FLYBOARDING GOA

If you want more than just sun, sand, and tan for your next beach vacation in Goa, how about trying the daunting water adventure of flyboarding? There is a learning curve to it, and you need to practise to get the hang of it. While it needs concentration and time to learn the sport, we can assure that it is definitely worth the effort. Once you get the grips, you can spend all day at the Baina Beach diving, flying, spinning, back-flipping, twisting, somersaulting, and dolphin-swimming, propelled by the powerful jet spray attached to your feet. Flying 30 feet into the air as the water gushes out in a forceful stream, making you rise from the water like Iron Man, is certain to give you that superhero kick.

GETTING THERE Goa is connected via regular flights from New Delhi and other metros.

STAY Grand Hyatt Goa (starts from ₹10,000/US\$ 142, hyatt.com); Goa Marriott Resort & Spa (starts from ₹13,000/US\$ 185, marriott.com)

PLAN IT WITH Travel Triangle (traveltriangle.com)

#14

Glamping DUDHWA NATIONAL PARK

Want the adventure, but loathe to give up the luxury? A boutique camping experience in the wilderness of Dudhwa National Park might just be up your alley. While the premium accommodation allows you to sit back and relax in complete privacy, curated experiences such as cycling through the farmlands and hamlets on the periphery of the park can add that dash of adrenaline. Situated in Uttar Pradesh along the India–Nepal border, comprising 490 square kilometres of farmlands, this rustic destination is a lovely countryside escape. The wilderness and the

indigenous flora and fauna are certain to prod your inner naturalist. Look out for waders, kingfishers, elephants, swamp deer, single-horned rhinos, Indian narrow-headed softshell turtle, and more. Another highlight is the interaction with the local Terai community.

GETTING THERE Dudhwa National Park can be reached by road from Lucknow (237 km) and Delhi (454 km).

STAY Jaagir Lodge Dudhwa (starts from ₹12,000/US\$ 171, tutc.com)

PLAN IT WITH The Ultimate Travelling Camp (tutc.com)





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HYDERABAD

Bask in the old-world charm of the 'City of Nizams'

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Watch the big cats roam free in a stunning photo feature

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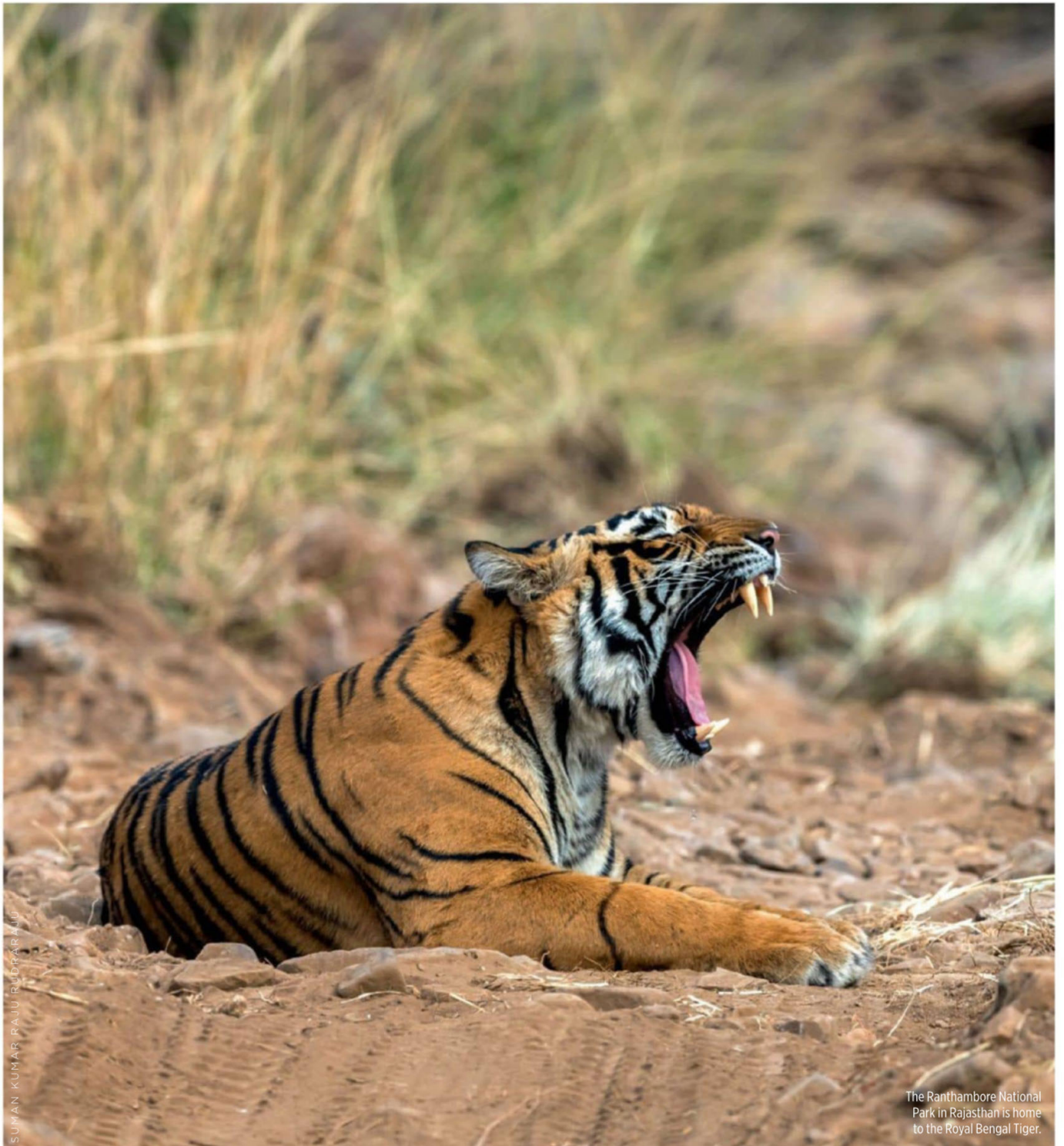
JAIPUR

Unravel an 'exotic secret' at the Kanota Fort

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SPITI

Take a road trip through magical moonscapes



SUMAN KUMAR RAJU BUDHARAJU

The Ranthambore National Park in Rajasthan is home to the Royal Bengal Tiger.

CHASING THE WILD

A safari through the Ranthambore National Park in Rajasthan brings you face to face with encounters of a lifetime—picture cuddling tiger cubs, crocodile skin glistening in the sun, golden grasslands embracing the evening light, and a protective tigress marking her territory.

Photographed by SUMAN KUMAR RAJU RUDRARAJU

Two of the four cubs of Tigress Krishna, also referred to as T-19, captured in a playful mood. These cubs were born in 2017, and are mainly spotted in Zone 4 of the Ranthambore National Park.







From top right: A cub of Tigress Noor captured soon after territorial scent marking—a behaviour used by animals to mark their territory usually involving urination; the smallest of the three lakes in Ranthambore National Park, Lake Malik Talao falls in Zone 3, and is extremely popular among birdwatchers. *Opposite:* The third cub of Tigress Krishna waiting to be reunited with its siblings across the safari track.





The golden grasslands are characteristic to Ranthambore National Park. Seen here is the landscape of Zone 3 captured in evening light.

GETTING THERE

Ranthambore National Park is located 130 km from Jaipur. Take a flight from New Delhi to Jaipur, and hail a cab for onward journey to the national park.

STAY

Aman+Khas (starts from ₹44,000/US\$ 628, aman.com); The Oberoi Vanyavilas Ranthambore (starts from ₹60,000/US\$ 857, oberoihotels.com); Suján Sher Bagh (starts from ₹60,000/US\$ 857, sujanluxury.com) offer indulgent stays.

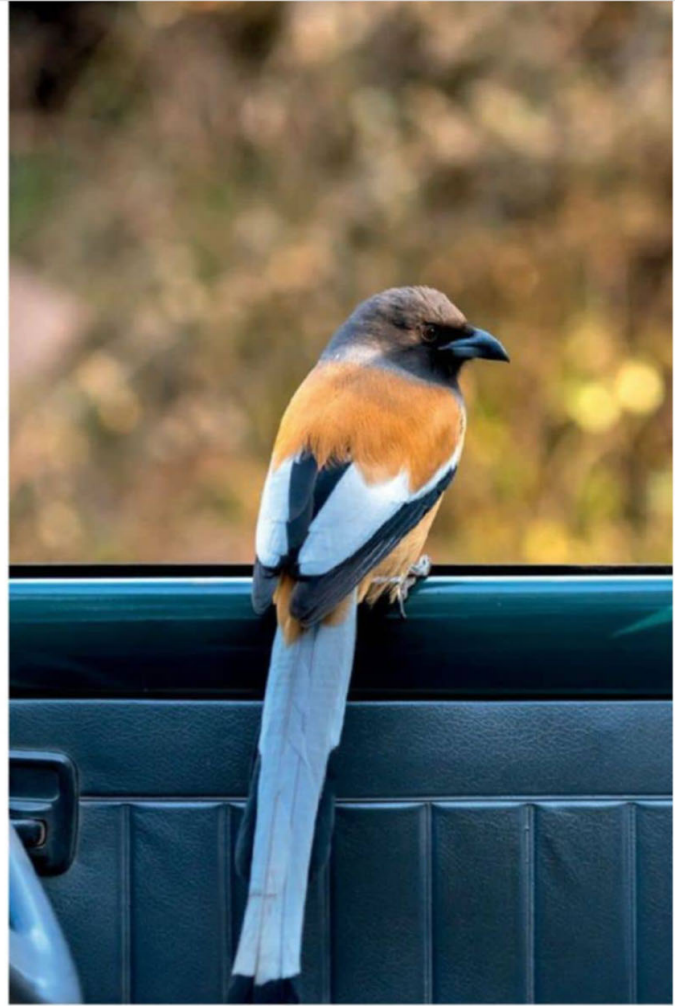
WHEN

The Ranthambore National Park remains open for visitors from October 1 to June 30 every year. It remains closed from July to September for visitors due to rainy season.

MUST SEE

The essential part of a trip to the Ranthambore National Park is spotting the big cats on a wildlife safari. Most of the luxury hotels and resorts offer curated safari experiences with personal naturalists and wildlife guides. You can also book a wildlife package, for up to 15 days, on the official website of Ranthambore National Park (ranthamborenationalpark.com). Go beyond the safari to explore the majestic Ranthambore Fort inside the national park. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the fort houses numerous Hindu and Jain temples in its premises.





Clockwise, from above: The plum-headed parakeet is a common sight during safaris; rufous treepie belongs to the crow family, and is characterised by a long tail and loud musical calls; an Indian marsh crocodile, or *magar*, sunbathing on the rocks. *Opposite:* An Indian gazelle, popularly known as Chinkara, is pictured in the grasslands (where they prefer to live). It's a feast to watch them leap over 20 feet during early morning safaris.



